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JIMMY DONOVAN OF MARITIME UNION OF AUSTRALIA

INTERVIEWEE: JIMMY DONOVAN

INTERVIEWERS: HARVEY SCHWARTZ

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[00:00:00] **HARVEY SCHWARTZ:** This is Harvey Schwartz, I'm with Ron Magden, and we're interviewing Jimmy Donovan today. Today is the 13th of September 2016, Tacoma, Washington.

Jimmy, can you outline the positions that you held in the MUA [Maritime Union of Australia] ?

[00:00:26] **JIMMY DONOVAN:** Yes. Have we got enough time? [smile] I was a delegate—I joined in 1962 the, then the Waterside Workers Federation. I became a delegate in 1964. I was secretary of the Patricks committee in 1967. Then the president of the Port Committee, which is a rank-and-file committee in 1969. I was elected a vice-president of the Sydney branch of the Waterside Workers in 1970. In 1978 I was elected an organizer, what they call a vigilance officer—I had to be vigilant!

[00:01:05] **RON MAGDEN:** [laughter]

[00:01:05] **JIMMY:** Which is an organizer today or they call a business agent. Then I held the position of the president of the branch and then I became the secretary-treasurer of the branch and that is the highest position you can hold. I held that position until I retired in 1998. Before we merged I was the national president of the Waterside Workers Federation and we merged with the seamen [Seamen's Union of Australia] in 1993 and I became the first president of the Maritime Union of Australia. I held that position until I retired in 1999. [sic] During that period I was a board member of the Maritime Workers Credit Union, which is originally the

Waterside Workers Credit Union for 22 years and I was a member of SARF — Stevedoring Employees Retirement Fund, director of that retirement fund for 12 years until I retired in 1999.

[00:02:10] **HARVEY:** Thank you, that's great. Did you talk with Ron yesterday about the merger in 1993? Did you cover that?

[00:02:17] **JIMMY:** Yes, yes. Not to the extent—I thought—I didn't tell you in my opinion it was our most successful merger. It was something that we were striving for but nobody wanted to take the cudgels up until the 1980s. The latter part of the 1980s we got really going on the issue and I was then the national president of the Waterside Workers and involved right up to the eyeballs in the amalgamation. It was a pretty tough discussion because the seamen wanted all that they had and we wanted all that we had. But knowing that wasn't going to happen in the end we had what we consider a very good amalgamation. There was a couple of little hiccups after that but other than those little hiccups it has been a wonderful merger in my opinion, it's been wonderful.

[00:03:09] **HARVEY:** When you say the seamen wanted what they wanted, the longshore wanted — what did each side want?

[00:03:16] **JIMMY:** There were different rules. Each one had its own set of rules particular to their own industry. We had what we called a Disciplinary Committee, believe it or not. We had our own discipline to take it away from the employer, where the seamen didn't have any discipline. All the disciplinary procedures was done either onboard the ship or with the ship owner. So there was all—we had to cover that. There was bringing the finances together. We had, I think, a little bit more, but that didn't matter. There were major issues and minor issues that in the end—the rules were the important part. We finally reached agreement some months before the amalgamation 1st of July '93. We overcome them hurdles and we never, ever had an argument about the rules ever since that period of time.

[00:04:16] **HARVEY:** Why couldn't you each keep your same work rules separately?

[00:04:22] **JIMMY:** Rules are different, especially financial rules. They had a different way that they financed. We had a different way of how we got finances. So we had to work out a way of ensuring that they both came together to ensure that in the end we were getting—everyone was paying the right dues and everyone was paying in the right manner. Of course, we were going through [cough] , excuse me, a phase of electronic deductions—because it used to be over-the-counter. The seamen were still doing theirs over-the-counter while we were doing ours by electronic deductions. The seaman had rolling funds on the ships and those rolling funds were monies that were used for mainly political purposes, to be involved in political activity, to be involved as a second arm of the union and the wharfies never had that. We didn't get that until a couple years after but we found out—and I'll deal with that later about how the international question has come in and involved the rank-and-file better by using of these finances. They had their own finances, we had our own finances; put them together they merged beautifully.

[00:05:43] **HARVEY:** Thank you. The question of internationalism is sort of key with the ILWU and with the MUA. Can you talk about how that sort of came about? I know that you were dogsbody [person given menial tasks] for Bridges in the 1960s. I think you covered some of that yesterday.

[00:06:03] **JIMMY:** We covered that yesterday.

[00:06:03] **HARVEY:** What comes after that? What did you not cover yesterday coming up to Big Bob [Robert McEllrath] ?

[00:06:08] **JIMMY:** We spoke yesterday with Ron about when Harry became the president of the ILWU in the 1930s there was an immediate response from their now general secretary Jim Healy who was elected in 1936] . Of course, they didn't know one another before Harry left to go on his journey overseas but there was a rapport that I know of in the 1940s.

As I said yesterday to Ron, [cough] , excuse me, there was a number of issues or a number of conditions that no doubt flowed from the West Coast of America to Australia. We dealt with that yesterday, that pickup sentence about pensions and about credit unions, etc.

Then international conferences started to take place but they were mainly officials that turned up, it was the officials that went. It was either Jim Healy and somebody else that traveled. And, of course, traveling in those days is nowhere near like traveling today. We dealt with that. But there were conferences. We had conferences in—we had what we called the All Ports Conference that started in 1941 and still goes on today, we call it the National Conference—every four years now. I know that the ILWU had their conferences every so many years—I think it is every three. Normally the federal officials attended those particular functions. What happened as rolling on over the years, more than one of the officials went but not many rank-and-file people went. It wasn't the done thing, mainly, I think, because of cost. Costs were fairly prohibitive in those days. That was a determining factor. In the Seamen's Union, a lot of rank-and-file people—because of their rolling funds that were used, as I said, mainly for political purposes. They got together, the rank-and-file got together more overseas than what the wharfies did.

That all changed and changed for the better since the amalgamation and more so since Paddy Crumlin has become the National Secretary. In fact, in 1995 we attended the conference in Liverpool. I attended. I took my office manager who had spent near 40 years in the office, is a wonderful, wonderful person, administrator in the office. She was my secretary and office manager. And I took a rank-and-filer. That was the first time in my living memory that even the wharfies, even though we were members of the MUA, that we took a rank-and-file person to a conference. Then when Paddy become the National Secretary then it was prolific. Every time there were conferences overseas, no matter where it was, the rank-and-file—in fact, they outnumbered the officials and that was very pleasing to see because if more than one goes and you go from more than one area then every area will find out what is going on in other ports throughout the world.

That's been sort of a—like all the boys went over to the big demo [demonstration] in France—I can't think of the name of the city, when they were talking about seaman throughout the world on these flags of convenience ships doing the work of dockers, longshoremen, and wharfies. The way they went overseas—I'd love to tell you the name of the city but I can't. Anyway they knew—we got to know what warfare was by virtue of the attack upon the demonstrators. I think it was Le Havre [France] , I'm not sure. Then they come at them with batons and tear gas and we'd never experienced that in Australia, even though we'd had a lot of demonstrations and a couple of people were killed in the 1917 dispute, I think it was the '14 dispute. We had never been attacked with tear gas. We were attacked by the coppers with batons but never that. Every young person that went overseas was learning and by learning, coming back and showing—and learning those experiences or giving those experiences back to the rank-and-file of people on the job.

[00:10:38] **RON:** Were you accused of being communist sympathizers in Liverpool and other places?

[00:10:48] **JIMMY:** Oddly you should say that. [cough] I asked David Crockroft—no, I didn't ask. I was the national president of the union and in Australia, in Sydney we were asked to take international guests out for dinner, which I did. There were about 14 or 15 of us. I was requested by the National Secretary, Johnny Coombs, "Let's not start talking about Liverpool." Anyway, as it turned out, I didn't ask the question but David Crockroft was the general secretary of the ITF [International Transport Workers' Federation] and it was a couple of years after the dispute had started.

He was asked a question—no prompting from me but it was a wonderful question—"Why didn't you support the Liverpool dockers?" His answer was, "Well, the union didn't support them. It was an illegal stoppage." The chap persisted. "Irrespective if it was illegal, all strikes under capitalism are illegal according to them, why didn't you support them?" He said, "Ah, they're being led by a rabble of Marxists." The hairs on my back went up a bit and I politely asked him, "Who were the Marxists?" He named one. I said, "There's a committee of about 20 and you've named 1. I don't understand how you can say they're being led by a rabble of Marxists."

To answer your question, Ron, they always try that. This was a bloke not of us, this was a bloke who was in charge of the International Transport Federation which we had been a member of for many, many years and raised millions of dollars by virtue of the flags of convenience ships not being paid. The crews on these ships if they were praying people or hoping people, they used to hope and pray they could go to Australia because once they got to Australia they knew they could get help from us in support of them—from the ITF too—and we used to give them their back pay. I'm not talking in hundreds, I'm not talking in thousands, I'm talking in tens—and sometimes hundreds-of-thousands of dollars' worth of back pay. They were so grateful and they still are today. "I hope the ship goes to Australia because we know we are going to get a fair go." Yeah.

[00:13:11] **HARVEY:** Jimmy, you mentioned that at the time of Liverpool you engaged with Big Bob, that Big Bob was over there, you guys were doing something. You mentioned that at lunch time.

[00:13:21] **JIMMY:** Yeah.

[00:13:21] **HARVEY:** It seemed like an important connection.

[00:13:23] **JIMMY:** I went over to the first International Conference in 1996, in February. They called an international conference. The person who was representing the ILWU then, in fact, was an ITF inspector. I won't mention any names in case I get him into trouble. Within a short period of time, I think it was in 1997 another international conference was held and Willie Adams [ILWU Secretary-Treasurer] turned up. I was a guest speaker speaking on the platform to thousands of people who were there in support of the sacked Liverpool dockers and he was in awe of what we were doing but he was there representing the ILWU and that is when the ILWU first got involved. I am not sure if Big Bob—Bob wasn't then the president of the International Longshoremen Warehouse Union and neither was Ray. I'm nearly sure that Willie was there, they came up about a year later. Then they fully supported Big Bob and Ray, and continuing with Willie, supported the dockers in Liverpool. They wouldn't cross a picket line. So 500 of these Liverpool dockers were sacked and not one of them ever got their job back, no one, because this was because of no support from their own union by a bloke by the name of Bill Morris who later becomes Sir Morris, and who is now Lord Morris [Baron Morris of Handsworth]. I will leave it to your own imagination how he got that, a sir and a lordship. They call it the 400 pound door in Parliament House. The lords go through the door, sign on and go back straight out through the

other door and they get 400 pounds for doing that every time Parliament sits. So he is being duly paid for what he didn't do to support the sacked Liverpool dockers.

[00:15:26] **RON:** I hate to stay on the Communist Party line but were you personally ever accused of being involved with the Party?

[00:15:34] **JIMMY:** Oh, yes. Yes. No, not only accused, for a period I was a member of the Party. Big Jim Healy, the first communist leader of the Waterside Workers Federation, and E. V. Elliott, Eliot V. Elliott was the first communist secretary of the Seamen's Union. Let me tell you, that's when things started to happen in both the seagoing and on the wharves in Australia with their leadership. Not only were they, after them many, many communists, left-wing ALP [Australian Labor Party] people got together and formed unity. It just wasn't the communists, it just wasn't the socialists, it was the left of the good left and of the left of the Australian Labor Party. In fact in the 1950s people from the Australian Labor Party if they were seen associated with the Communist Party, or with communists, they were expelled. In fact, a couple of officials from the Sydney branch were expelled from the ALP and turned out to be wonderful, wonderful officials. Dutchy Young, the president, and Ivo Barrett, the assistant secretary. So yes, yeah. In Australia it hasn't been in the past or now a stigma. In fact, it was looked upon in some degree as one of the main issues that saw the waterfront and the seagoing side turn upside down. It was a period in which we went from a right-wing leadership that was content in doing the same thing: go in, put your hand up, 'we want a few more bob in wages and we want a few more conditions'. They would get frightened and walk out and say, "We can't achieve it." When the left came along and the communists came along, it was achievable.

[00:17:36] **RON:** The wharfies union was not dominated by the communists? Where would you place—was there a conservative faction and a liberal or radical faction?

[00:17:58] **JIMMY:** Yes.

[00:17:58] **RON:** Within the union itself, what was the respective strengths of the different groups?

[00:18:05] **JIMMY:** That is a very good question. The makeup of the Federation itself was a conglomerate of 40 to 50 branches and not all branches had left-wing leadership. In fact a number of the branches, which I won't name, had still a conservative mold. A bit towards the middle but conservative. Then when Jim Healy was elected it wasn't all cream and cakes for Jim because a number of the branches did not see they could work with him. But Jim worked with them and then they sort of came around and saw Jim as a genuine person. It is not because you are a communist, it is the person that makes you, it is the person within yourself that the people respect. Now there's a communist there or a right-winger there but it's what you do in the middle. You draw the people in, you work together and you work as one. Interestingly, Jim Healy died in 1961, and Charlie Fitzgibbons, who was an unknown at that period of time—but it became the ALP versus the communists—the Australian Labor Party, which is equivalent to the Democrats here in America. Charlie Fitzgibbons stood from a relatively small port in Newcastle against Tom Nelson from the Sydney branch who was a member of the Communist Party and Charlie won. From then the policy of the union never changed much, never changed. A number of the branches were still left-wing and Charlie came in and didn't bring his conservative or right-wing—he wasn't a complete right-wing, middle of the road—he did the same as Jim Healy, he worked together for the benefit of the wharfies that he represented. Charlie was there until 1984-85. Tas Bull came in—oh no, Norm Docker came in. Norm was in bad health and was only there for about 18 months, 2 years. Then Tas Bull came in who was a left-winger but turned into conservative, not totally conservative but mainly

towards the center of politics. He, again, worked with the communists and the communists worked with him. I was there many years on the National Council and national president not under Tas but under John Coombs and then John Coombs came in again. The union never ever lost its identity. It's always been classified because of its role, because of what it has done as a left-wing union. But that the helm since 1961 there hasn't been a communist in the leadership, it's been a middle-of-the-road left-wingers. Yes, it is an interesting story but we never, ever lost that concept of being a left-wing union. Paddy Crumlin is there now. Paddy has never been a member of the Communist Party. He was a member of the MUSAA [Maritime Unionist Socialist Activities Association] which was a maritime socialists activities association on the waterfront, a breakaway, sort of an arm. But Paddy again taken over the mantle and the role remains the same, that we are a left-wing union.

One of the main reasons we are left at this period of time and have been in the past is that the employer won't leave us alone. It is like the organization here, the Pacific—what is it called, Pacific—APM, isn't it?

[00:22:05] **RON:** Yes.

[00:22:06] **HARVEY:** Pacific Maritime Union.

[00:22:07] **JIMMY:** Pacific Maritime Union. It is like the employers in Australia, they just won't leave us alone. We are going at the present time in Australia through an unprecedented attack upon us. We've got a conservative government in, we've got the employers who think that they can do what they want to do by just ignoring the agreements we had with them and we're not letting them.

We just had an enormous dispute with Hutchisons [Hutchison Ports Australia] . Hutchisons have opened as a third operator in the Port of Sydney. We didn't need a third operator, there's only enough there for two. But the government insisted they wanted a third operator. In he came, dealt with the union, got what he wanted, we got what we wanted. He didn't have many ships and so we had to work in with that, we got a 30-hour week, a divisor of a week. He said, "How many do you want?" We've got 96 people working there. Then at the beginning of this year he then wants to sack in Brisbane and in Sydney some 60 people, just sack them, out the door. "Away you go, I've had enough." He didn't succeed. He didn't succeed. One of the reasons he didn't succeed was one of the reasons in 1998.

In 1998 when they bought the dogs and the balaclava'd goons onto the waterfront, public perception turned against the government and the stevedores towards the workers, the wharfies. We learn, they never learn and they are attacking us again in no end and they're not going to win because we'll get the public on side, we get the other unions onside.

In Sydney at the present time, most unions are under attack. There's sort of no right, no middle, no left, they're all working in together. It's wonderful to see unions that would never had worked with the left and left unions who would never work with the right, all working together because we are all under attack by a conservative government that wants to take everything off organized labor. If organized labor is there, we can continue; if there is no organized labor, they are going to raid right over the top of us.

[00:24:36] **HARVEY:** One of the things that's very interesting is there's been a relationship between Paddy Crumlin and Big Bob. It seems to have developed and evolved and it is an important connection that has a lot of

implications for internationalism. Can you describe the relationship and give us a couple of examples of ways they've cooperated?

[00:24:59] **JIMMY:** Yes. It has been a wonderful—Paddy could most probably speak more ably on this question and so would Big Bob. Since I've retired and since Bob was elected and Paddy was elected, I'm still very active. I'm the National President of the Retired Veterans in Australia and keenly attend all meetings and friendly pickets and everything. Of course, we are an active group. So, I see from the sidelines the wonderful relationship that has developed even to a higher level than it did under all the previous leaders between Paddy and Big Bob. If you go back to our lockout—when we were locked out in 1998 and the workers over here, the longshoremen refused to unload the Columbus Canada. Then when Big Bob was arrested and looked like being [unclear] into jail, we sent many, many of their rank-and-file and a couple of officials. But the rank-and-file come over here in support of Big Bob because of—the relationship started long before our dispute of '98 but it grew with strength from '98.

It's grown even stronger because of the ties and because Paddy is now the national president of the International Transport Federation. Let me tell you, without the ITF—in my opinion, had the ITF came to the help and rescue of the Liverpool dockers then the rest of the dockers throughout the world wouldn't be in the position it is today. But it has been strengthened, strengthened by Paddy being there and by the support of Big Bob. The Longshoremen Association is also a member of the IDC, the International Dockers Committee Convention, which I helped set up, had the pleasure of setting up in 1991 in Tenerife [Spain] . Who was there? Big Bob. Who was there? [?Ray Familardi?] . All what's been done before has been cemented into this future.

The work that they're doing—if there's a call upon the longshoremen by Paddy as the president of the ITF or at the national secretary of the MUA, they are there to operate, they are there to help and not only help Australians, and we help Americans, but they are there to help other dockers throughout the world. And it's been proved—when the ITF and other dockers throughout that world—the two most militiable [sic] , I'd have to say, would be the MUA and the longshoremen. It sends a bit of a shudder through the people who are attempting to do what they're doing throughout the world. That bond has been strengthened by not only the support here in Australia and America but by support throughout the world.

[00:28:11] **HARVEY:** That's great. One detail, you'd said when Big Bob was sent to jail—

[00:28:17] **JIMMY:** No, when he was threatened with jail.

[00:28:20] **HARVEY:** Well, he served one day.

[00:28:21] **JIMMY:** One day. Oh, okay, yeah.

[00:28:24] **HARVEY:** Right. You say some folks came over from the MUA. What did they do when they got here? Did they demonstrate?

[00:28:30] **JIMMY:** Yes, they were part of the demonstration. It was at the wheat silos. Yes, they were demonstrating with everybody else. That's when, of course, Bob stopped the train. He's big enough to, by the way. [laugh] Having said that, they, of course, went. They were here, they were here in moral support. I do not know how many were here but it was quite a few but the beauty—they were all rank-and-filers.

[00:28:59] **HARVEY:** Any other concrete examples you can think of where things happened of one kind or another?

[00:29:07] **JIMMY:** The beauty I suppose is what the ILWU has done in Panama to start with. They have an organization extends down as far as Panama. That wouldn't have happened many years ago without—the ITF wouldn't have give its ultimatum. That in itself has been an outstanding position. We could not go in and say, "Look, we're going to take over New Zealand," because it wouldn't be on, they got their own. The New Zealand are pretty strong from where they are but Panama, having now the strength to be with the ILWU, that in itself gives heart to the International Transport Federation of which Paddy is the president.

[00:29:58] **HARVEY:** That's good. Do you have a question?

[00:30:06] **RON:** When you have a protest movement in Australia on an issue, do you go to Canberra? Is it volume of the crowd size, is it newspaper attention? What is the focus of the MUA when it is out to overturn something or protest something? What is the method?

[00:30:39] **JIMMY:** Recently we were, about two months ago, in Canberra. Before we go into that, we have a lobbyist now in Canberra, another innovation of Paddy. He is there to lobby, if he can—the conservative people won't talk to him. But when the Labor Party governor is in, Rod was very active in convincing quite a number. When the Labor Party was in from 2007 the Seafarers Bill went before the Parliament. There was discussions to improve the position on the seagoing vessels from Australia and around Australia. I forget what they called it now, but arising out of that we were able to lobby and also to have discussions with people in the ALP to ensure that at the end of the day there was going to be a seagoing union and to have a seagoing union you need seagoing ships. We were able to reach agreement on a number of issues that in fact saw a number of conditions gone to ensure that at the end of the day the ships would still be there. The Labor Party was defeated three and a bit years ago and since then they've [conservative government] tried to amend—get rid of—that legislation. What is happening to Australia now is that under the—they give a special permission for ships to work on the coast. I should know it, I'll think of it while I'm going through. A single-voyage permit, that's it, a single-voyage permit or 747 visas for people to come in and work from any other part of the world in the areas in which our union is in there. What is happening at the present time the cabotage [rights of a company to transport good within a different country] is completely gone just about. I think, if I'm going to be honest to you, I think we've got six out of some forty to fifty ships that were there twenty, twenty-five years ago. They got rid of the seaman's bin pickup center—the previous conservative government under Howard in 1999, I think it was.

So, we go to Canberra. The question was how do we do it. We originally took a couple of busloads—the majority of them were from the pensioner organization—to go down and protest to the government for more ships being taken away from us. The M. V. Portland, the goons came onboard the ship at half-past 1:00, 2:00 in the morning. There were 30 of them all dressed up in black. Came on, got the master key to all of the cabins and then impolitely just said, "Off. Out." Didn't give them time to even pack up their gear. This is happening in an OECD [Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development] country, in Australia. What's happening in the other non-developed countries? You can only just imagine if they can do that in a place like Australia—go up the gangway, bypass the picket line, don't care about—come through a back away or they come across by ship. Here we were having it.

We went down and demonstrated and we got, surprisingly, great support, very good support from the people who were going—"Toot your horn if you support," a lot of toots. People came out to support. Parliamentarians,

the Labor Party and a number of independents came out and supported us. I must say that would be about my hundredth trip to Canberra. Some of it's been a bit of pleasure but the majority of them being to go down there and protest out of our old Parliament House and now our new Parliament House. Let me tell you, I enjoy every second of it and so does everyone that comes down.

[00:35:05] **RON:** You're probably one of the few that could go there to protest that would get a reaction. The power of the union is fairly strong in public opinion?

[00:35:22] **JIMMY:** Yes. But it's perceived in the other way. Of course, workers don't control the media, never have and let's hope into the future that they may. If we don't—if we don't, they are going to continue to pursue us.

What I heard at the conference here yesterday of what's happening on Long Beach [California] about the ships that are going to—in fact, I saw one. I thought it was at another port down there, what the other big port, the one north of—what's another—I'll figure. Anyway, I saw that particular crane that was being built, it wasn't in operation, it was being built, but it showed you a four spreaders, four-twenties or two-twenties, up and down testing. Then when they bring it out—at eye-level, do you remember? Bring it out, land it on the platform for a moment, undo the twist-lock—if it needs to be done, they're put in there and then it goes onto the back, onto another platform, the other crane picks it up. From that second on there is no ILWU. Then it becomes totally, totally all automated.

When I heard what happened yesterday—I can remember Charlie Fitzgibbons coming to us in 1967 when I first met Harry Bridges and Harry came out, in fact, to tell us what containerization was going to do to us. Charlie Fitzgibbons, oddly enough, used exactly the same figuration of what I just gave you then but it's taken since 1970 to 2016 for that to happen but it's happening now.

Then the whole terminal then shuts down from 3 o'clock in the morning 'til 8 o'clock in the morning. In that period of time all the boxes are then moved to intermodal, into trains or trucks. All the other containers are then moved from the stacking area to another stacking area and it'll go on the ship at 8 o'clock that morning. Not one single person other than people doing it in a computer. No one's there.

[00:38:10] **RON:** Did Brexit have any effect, the movement of Great Britain from the European Union? Australia was one of the reasons England took a modified stance at becoming a part of the European Union when it happened and now with the split-off of Great Britain will that have an effect on, say, the economy or the structure of Australia or are you far enough away from it that what England does as far as the Continent is concerned won't affect you much?

[00:38:58] **JIMMY:** Let's put it this way. Before they went into the European Common Market, if my memory serves me correct, I think Britain was still our third or fourth biggest exporter, importer. Since they've been part of the European Common Market I don't know where they are, they're way down the list. But then if you look at what Britain is—Britain is no an exporter of commodities, they haven't got their own resources. They've got coal but they don't mine it anymore because it's cheaper to get it elsewhere; they've got no iron ore; they haven't got gold. They've got a bit of oil up in the North Sea but other than that they're capital, it's money, they deal in money.

As for will it affect Australia, initially I'm shocked that they've done it but I then find out that a lot of the unions—and then the Labor Party of Great Britain didn't do their job properly, but a lot of the unions were for Brexit, which I was surprised to hear. But I don't think it will affect Australia for a time to come. They just had the APEC [Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation], the 20 heads of the world got together in China. While they were there the British prime minister and the Australian prime minister got together and before you know it they are now signing what they call—these wonderful, wonderful things called free trade agreements. We could have one in place within two years. By the time Britain exits the common market we could have in place a free trade agreement. It's not free, it might be trade but then what we trade with Britain—whether it lifts it up I don't know.

Japan used to be our biggest trading partner and then America and now it's China. As I said, we were talking yesterday, I think it'll be India well into the future. Britain will be down the list a little bit too because what do we get from—what do they produce in commodity goods, nothing in the way other than commodities. I don't think it'll have effect upon us for a few years to come.

[00:41:27] **RON:** Is there a special trade relationship between Australia and England?

[00:41:32] **JIMMY:** Not that I know of.

[00:41:35] **RON:** The same with the United States, there's not a special trade—

[00:41:39] **JIMMY:** Yes.

[00:41:40] **RON:** Is NAFTA a part of that?

[00:41:43] **JIMMY:** Yes. We've just recently signed the Pacific Free Trade Agreement. As one commentator said, "I don't think it's how free it is, it's a commercial arrangement." If you look at it, that's exactly what it is. It's a commercial arrangement between countries about the moving of goods from one to another. And it doesn't matter how many goods they want to bring in, they'll bring them and they'll just dump it on the market. Now we know what happens when dumping happens on the market, it happened in 1928-29. They called it, as I said yesterday, the worst depression ever been seen. It'll be interesting to see what comes out of the free trade agreements because it's not going to assist the workers.

As I said yesterday about the bloke, his name was Ford, Michael Ford, he said, "We're going to have robots that will produce 40 hamburgers an hour. That's going to be wonderful," he said. But in another 10, 20, 30, 40 years who's going to have enough money to buy the hamburgers? You equate hamburgers to television, to iPads, all of the new technology that's coming on. We can afford it today because people are in work but when the new technology comes along there'll be very, very few people working, they'll all be unemployed.

[00:43:20] **RON:** Is the basis of Australian trade still natural resources centered? There's very little manufacturing in Australia, maybe textiles. What is the base? Is it going to continue to be natural resources or is there a special place that Australia can find a niche in the market?

[00:43:46] **JIMMY:** Good question. It's not only happening to Australia but our manufacturing sector is going backwards at the rate of knots. The Amalgamated Metal Workers Union, in fact, their membership is declining at the rate of knots because there is just no manufacturing in Australia. There's little pockets of it. Where we

used to have people working—I'll give an example, a place like Alexandria only a few kilometers south of Sydney was a mecca of businesses that dealt with metal, any forms of metals—stoves, TVs, you name it, it was produced down there. All of that is completely gone, completely gone, now it's units [sic], completely surrounded, all the area is now units. Where people used to work—and I'm not talking in hundreds or thousands, I'm talking tens of thousands of people—you'll see because of our manufacturing going offshore and also because of the new technology that they used today to produce the goods, they've all gone.

The main thing that we still get America, believe it or not, we still get the Cat machines, Caterpillars, John Deere. They still come out there at the rate of knots. We used to have a car manufacturing in Sydney, Melbourne, Geelong, and Adelaide. [Now] None in Sydney, there's none in Melbourne, Geelong is on its deathbed, and Adelaide is about to close Holden and Ford. Holden is about to close in Geelong, I think it's Holden, Ford somewhere in Adelaide, Elizabethtown, they're about to fold up within a year to 18 months. I suppose all the manufacturing things we get—the really good manufacturing stuff will still tend to come from America but all the rest will come from—

[00:46:07] **RON:** China.

[00:46:08] **JIMMY:** —China. When China gets a bit too dear for us, we'll move onto India where it'll be a bit cheaper.

[00:46:14] **RON:** That's was we talked about last time was the future lies with India, a lot of it, for Australia.

[00:46:22] **JIMMY:** Exactly right. As I said yesterday, the global capital will go to wherever it is cheapest to make or manufacture. They've done it for centuries. Colonialization. The Brits had colonialization to rely on for hundreds of years and, of course, colonialization is overtaken now by global capitalism and global capitalism now determines where and when, where, how much you pay for your goods. When China becomes too dear—they're talking now in China the middle class is now the biggest class, not the working class, the middle class, and we are talking in hundreds of millions. When them hundreds of millions want more or want higher wages, higher living standards, wanting more, they'll move over to India where it'll be cheaper to manufacture.

[00:47:17] **RON:** Yes. Do we get to see you next year?

[00:47:21] **JIMMY:** What we do in Australia is we rotate these visits. In fact, I've pushed my little—to the limit because I was in Vancouver two years ago, I'm here this year so it is somebody else's turn. But it was a special invitation that was given to us by Dean when he was in Fremantle last year because I had Kevin Robinson from the Liverpool Dockers with me who played a wonderful role in what happened in Liverpool—what didn't happen. As I said to you yesterday, Ron, the wheel has turned in Liverpool, no scabs, all union, and got union agreements. The wheel has turned even there.

[00:48:08] **RON:** If you won't come here, we'll go there.

[00:48:12] **JIMMY:** [chuckle] It'll be a pleasure, absolute pleasure to have you there, all of you.

[00:48:15] **RON:** We've got to go to—

[00:48:17] **HARVEY:** What year did you become head of the veterans?

[00:48:20] **JIMMY:** Ah, Harry's been gone—what would it be, about 7 years ago. Harry Black, another comrade of mine, prior to me—he reminds me very much of the chap we spoke about this morning, Keith Richard, was it, Jr.?

[00:48:40] **HARVEY:** Keith Jenkins, Jr.

[00:48:41] **JIMMY:** Keith Jenkins, Jr. From what I gather, Harry Black was the mold that we had in Australia for Keith Jenkins, Jr. Harry had that wonderful personal, wonderful knowledge, and wanted to share it and share it he did. In fact, it was Harry that got me involved in my first speaking jaunt on the waterfront in 1964, I think it was, and I was shaking at the knee. He got me to speak at my first dockworkers meeting not long after and I was still shaking at the knees. He was like—the lad we just spoke about—he was our mentor in Sydney, Australia. A wonderful, wonderful comrade and a great educator.

[00:49:26] **RON:** It's been great to be with you.

[00:49:28] **JIMMY:** Thank you, everyone, same here.

[00:49:29] **HARVEY:** Thank you, Jimmy. Thanks a lot.

[end recording]